A REVIEW OF

ONTARIO'S SHORT-TERM

EMPLOYMENT STIMULATION PROGRAM

Board of Industrial Leadership
and Development (BILD)

November, 1982

INTRODUCTION

In the May 1982 Ontario Budget, Treasurer Frank Miller announced an immediate job creation initiative, the Employment Stimulation Program, with a budget of $171 million.

The Board of Industrial Leadership and Development (BILD) coordinated the creation of an estimated 33,000 short-term jobs, directed at helping those communities hardest hit by unemployment. This is 2,000 jobs over the May target.

The Employment Stimulation Program focused on employment opportunities for unemployed young people, farming areas, and communities where recent lay-offs threatened to force workers to leave those communities.

Short-term jobs have been created through the federal/provincial Cooperative Employment Fund accelerated capital investment projects, youth employment projects and farm improvement initiatives.

A summary of these provincial job creation projects follows:

COOPERATIVE EMPLOYMENT FUND

To match funds available through Section 38 of the federal Unemployment Insurance Act for job creation projects for laid-off workers receiving UI benefits, Ontario has created the co-operative employment fund. Specific projects have been designed and initiated by the Ontario Ministries of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Food, and Energy to assist regions such as northern Ontario and industries with particularly high rates of unemployment.

Initiatives through this fund include a residential energy audit program; special mine rehabilitation projects; employment in provincial parks, forests, fisheries and conservation areas; and an agricultural resource inventory project.

Funding provided for the current fiscal year is $15 million. To supplement the federal Unemployment Insurance wage support of $240 per week, Ontario adds a maximum of $60 per week per job in wages, plus benefits, equipment and materials used to carry out a project. The provincial cost of the various programs ranges from $200 to $230 per week, with individual jobs lasting from 10 to 20 weeks.

By November of this year, 3,400 jobs had been created.

1. RESIDENTIAL ENERGY AUDIT PROGRAM (REAP)

Ontario Hydro and local electrical utilities have established a residential energy audit program, REAP, for homeowners to identify ways in which their residences can be made more energy efficient.

With an additional $800,000 from BILD, the Ministry of Energy has extended REAP to areas of the province not previously covered. Local electricity utilities will hire and train up to 192 unemployed workers to undertake surveys in their areas. Employment will be for 20 weeks.

2. SPECIAL MINING EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

With BILD's funding of $5.9 million, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is creating 1,570 jobs for laid-off workers in Ontario's troubled mining industry.

The Special Mining Employment program employs workers to fence and cap abandoned mine openings, rehabilitate mine tailings and work in other land reclamation projects.

3. SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT FOR FORESTRY, PROVINCIAL PARKS, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AREAS

These special upgrading projects, administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources, create employment for laid-off workers receiving unemployment insurance benefits.

The Treasurer's job creation initiative committed $2.8 million to the maintenance and improvement of provincial parks; $2.3 million for improvement to fisheries and $2 million for conservation areas. In addition, BILD provided $4.5 million to accelerate forest improvement work.

These initiatives include upgrading streams and spawning channels, parks, historic sites, picnic areas, forests, and snowmobile trails. Jobs last on average for 14 weeks ranging in length from six to 26 weeks.

In total, 332 projects have been initiated, creating jobs for 4,168 people.

Although all parts of the province have benefited from this program, special emphasis has been placed on areas hardest hit by unemployment. For example, 42 projects have been undertaken in the Sudbury area, 28 in the Bancroft area, 12 each near Chatham and Tweed, 11 in Kirkland Lake and 10 in Timmins.

4. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY PROJECT

With a $700,000 allocation from BILD, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food has created 163 jobs, averaging 12 to 26 weeks, to survey agricultural land use and tile drainage in the province.

This project will provide the Ministry with data and maps on which to base future planning for land use projects.

ACCELERATED CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS PROGRAM

The province's long-term capital investment program for government facilities has been moved ahead to create immediate jobs in this sector.

Under this program, Ontario is funding repairs and additions to government buildings including schools, universities and colleges, construction and maintenance of highways, roads, municipal bridges and water and sewage treatment projects. BILD also pays for direct labour costs in renovations and repair projects sponsored by municipalities and local organizations in unorganized territories in Northern Ontario.

Forest management and fisheries enhancement projects are also being funded through this program.

The allocation for the 1982-83 fiscal year for the accelerated capital investment projects is $133 million. To date, this has resulted in the creation of 15,350 short-term jobs.

Ontario government ministries involved in this job creation program are Colleges and Universities,Education, Environment, Government Services, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Natural Resources, Northern Affairs, Transportation and Communications and Tourism and Recreation.

1. REPAIR PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY AND LOCAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, this job creation program concentrated on labour-intensive projects to meet occupational health standards and fire safety regulations in Ontario's colleges and universities.

Also included was asbestos removal from buildings, energy conservation projects and general repairs.

Similar activities were carried out for elementary and secondary schools through the Ministry of Education as

well as accelerated selected projects involving building and service equipment repairs, repainting and renovations.

All universities, colleges and school boards participated in this program which provided temporary employment for 2,600 workers.

In support of this initiative, BILD contributed $5.5 million for universities, $4.5 million for colleges and $5.0 million for local schools.

2. ACCELERATED WATER AND SEWAGE TREATMENT PROJECTS

Through the job creation allocations, municipalities will receive $4.9 million for the construction of water and sewage treatment facilities which will cost a total of $36.2 million.

The $4.9 million is in addition to $173.4 million already committed by the Ministry of the Environment.

Projects initiated to create employment opportunities were on an inventory of municipal projects eligible for provincial support, but dependent on municipal support to proceed.

Approximately 1,000 people have been employed to date working an average of six months each.

3. RENOVATION AND REPAIR PROJECTS FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The aim of this $7.9 million initiative is to accelerate accommodation alterations and repairs to government buildings throughout the province as well as building construction.

The Ministry of Government Services has created 1,500 jobs through this program.

Similarly, the job creation program has committed $1.7 million to improve sanitation facilities and reconstruct a grist mill at Upper Canada Village, a major tourist attraction in Ontario. This project has employed 100 people.

4. ONTARIO EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Ontario Employment Incentive program provides local governments throughout the province with the opportunity to participate in job-creation projects to accelerate repair and renovation of municipal property.

Only labour costs are eligible for grants. Funding was made in proportion to the number of people within the municipality receiving social assistance. Projects include the painting and maintenance of jails, libraries, senior citizens' homes and arenas; repair and painting of

bridges and watermains; and improvements to recreational facilities.

More than 700 municipalities plus 20 conservation authorities have participated in this job creation venture which is administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

In addition to the $34.5 million contribution for labour costs, municipalities have provided $22.6 million for materials and equipment.

This incentive program has created 8,135 new jobs in various regions of the province.

5. NORTHERN ONTARIO EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

This program, run by the Ministry of Northern Affairs, supports community improvement projects carried out by local services boards, community service organizations and clubs in unorganized areas of Northern Ontario.

These jobs are labour-intensive, involve repair and maintenance work of benefit to the whole community and last about 12 weeks.

Through the $700,000 allocation, this incentive program has created employment for 365 workers to date.

6. FISHERIES ENHANCEMENT AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

With emphasis on enhancing the long-term viability of Ontario's forests and fisheries, this program involves the acceleration of capital projects designed to upgrade government fish hatcheries, assist greenhouse growers, and build roads improving access to Ontario's natural resources.

BILD has committed $2 million to the fisheries component and $5 million to forest management run by the Ministries of Natural Resources and Northern Affairs.

This project has employed 320 workers.

7. ACCELERATED ROAD PROJECTS

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications received $59.5 million to accelerate its regular road construction and highway maintenance projects and to accelerate work on local road projects and bridge and culvert construction. Under this latter project, 125 municipalities received $4 million.

Thirteen hundred jobs have been created to date.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Not only are young people facing special difficulties in finding employment, they also often need specific training opportunities to acquire job-related skills.

The Ontario Youth Secretariat, with an additional $12.75 million allocation from BILD for the 1982-83 fiscal year, has undertaken a new Winter Experience program and increased job opportunities through enrichments to on-going youth programs such as the Ontario Youth Employment Program (OYEP) and the Ontario Career Action Program (OCAP).

An additional 12,000 young people have been placed in short-term jobs and training positions with this increased funding.

1. ONTARIO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (OYEP)

This job creation program, in operation since 1977, subsidizes the wages of newly-hired young people, 15 to 24 years of age, at the rate of $1.25 per hour. The $7 million enrichment from BILD helped expand job creation activities and resulted in an additional 9,860 young people employed for 12 to 16 weeks from April to October this year.

In total, with OYEP assistance, 19,000 employers created jobs for about 43,000 young people this summer.

2. ONTARIO CAREER ACTION PROGRAM (OCAP)

The Ontario Career Action Program (OCAP) which operates on a year-round basis, offers unemployed 16- to 24-year olds who have left the educational system, an opportunity to gain work experience and develop necessary job skills.

Through this program, Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology find suitable on-the-job training positions for these young people with local firms for up to 16 weeks.

Each trainee receives $100 a week from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. There is no cost to employers. On average, each training position costs approximately $1,650.

OCAP has been in operation since 1976. With an additional $2 million from the job creation initiatives for the 1982-83 fiscal year, the number of young people participating in the program has increased to 890.

3. WINTER EXPERIENCE

Special projects developed for young people who experience particular difficulty in finding employment

were initiated for the winter months, November 1982 through March 1983. These projects will provide 1,235 jobs. These jobs offer 12 to 20 weeks of basic work experience at an hourly wage of $3.50.

BILD has allocated $3.75 million to the Winter Experience program for short-term jobs created by provincial and local governments, community organizations and industry.

FARM IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Through this farm improvement program administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ontario Government increased its funding by $15 million for tile drainage and the new Farmstead Improvement program.

These short-term job creation projects were successful in stimulating local employment, as well as improving agricultural production yields. Nearly 3,400 jobs have been created.

1. FARMSTEAD IMPROVEMENT

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food, with $9 million, is helping farmers upgrade farm buildings and fences, and employ local workers.

Farmers are paid up to half the cost of eligible projects for example, farm building and fence maintenance, up to a maximum of $2,000.

To date, 3,000 short-term jobs have been created.

2. TILE DRAINAGE PROGRAM

Much of Ontario's agricultural land can be made more productive by using tile drainage. BILD allocated an additional $6 million to enrich the Ministry of Agriculture and Food efforts to encourage tile drainage projects throughout the province.

The enrichment resulted in the creation of 390 short-term jobs since May 1982.

For further information call (416) 965-7171